# NEW HORIZONS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

#### SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

January-June 2001

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#### NHP SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT: January – June 2001

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This document describes the activities and accomplishments of the New Horizons for Primary Schools (NHP) Activity during January to June 2001. NHP has the objective to enhance the performance of Jamaican primary school students in numeracy and literacy. The focus is on those children who, because of poverty and other disabling conditions, have had little academic success in school. Increased academic success is to be accomplished through the development of model interventions in 72 schools that, when tested, can be used to improve the performance of low-achieving children throughout Jamaica. The major activities conducted during the sixmonth report period included a set that extended across all ten of the project interventions. These are summarized in reference to the Intermediate Results (IRs) of the USAID/Jamaica Mission Results Framework under each of the NHP interventions:

• Intervention #1: Development of Innovative Math and Reading Programs. (IR4.1 Improved Quality of Teaching)

Accomplishments: Principals were further instructed in the transformation of School Development Plans to annual "Action Plans" and further guided on the involvement of the School Development Teams and Resource Teachers in the planning and implementation of meaningful school-based activities intended to institutionalize innovative programs in numeracy and literacy for more child-centered teaching. This was accomplished, in part, by the improved monitoring by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) during its extensive site-based activities during the period. It was also a topic at the March Principals' Seminar. A total of 777 classrooms were visited with clinical supervisory practices conducted and over 230 demonstration teaches conduced by the PIU Specialists and Project Director. The NHP team engaged in collaboration with principals and resource teachers throughout the period in assuring that plans and practices enhanced effectiveness in the area of *Improved Quality of Teaching* and within the other Intermediate Results of the under Strategic Objective 4 of the Mission Results Framework.

• Intervention #2: Teacher In-service Training. (IR4.1 Improved Quality of Teaching)

Accomplishments: Collaboration with the Core Curriculum Unit continued in implementing the Revised Primary Curriculum in the project schools while continuing also to intensity of PIU site-based training, sharing and monitoring activities as summarized immediately above. The "bottoms-up" approach to improved literacy and numeracy was enhanced during the six-month period through involvement of the Mathematics and Literacy Resource Teachers in the school-based planning at each school, implementation of numerous "in-house" workshops, a half-dozen cluster workshops conducted through the efforts of the Professional Development Unit (PDU) Training Coordinator assigned to the NHP, and other improvement initiatives. Especially successful were the activities conducted in the area of improving the teachers' abilities to plan, prepare relevant materials, and

practice an array of promising approaches designed to enhance teacher-student and student-student interactions in the course of enhancing learning in mathematics and reading. The first set of "participant training" activities were conducted in collaboration with the PDU and National Council on Education (NCE).

• Intervention #3: Governance and Leadership Training. (IR 4.3 Improved Management of Schools)

**Accomplishments:** The local consultant whose contract was extended through Juarez and Associates conducted activities under the NCE that resulted in feedback from stakeholders and in a refined "Operations Manual on Governance and Leadership of School Boards" and 23 modules on topics in governance and leadership training, including one on school development planning. These activities complemented others in support of *Improved Management of Schools*.

• **Intervention** #4: Parent Training. (IR 4.2 *Improved School Attendance*)

**Accomplishments:** The local consultant hired through Juarez and Associates extended the scope of work in order to conduct a training program for 268 Parent Training Coordinators in 70 of the 72 NHP schools across the island. This and related activities intended to influence school attendance were completed under the NCE in collaboration with the PIU and others, including special PTA events and involvement in NHP-funded participant training in the area of parenting.

• **Intervention** #5: Health and Nutrition. (IR 4.2 *Improved School Attendance*)

**Accomplishment:** The NHP-supported breakfast programs the eight project schools were in place throughout the six-month period, serving over 53,500 breakfasts over 114 days with an average of 468 needy students participating. The Nutrition Specialist prepared a status report and designed plans for the new academic year. She also presented a program-related paper at an international conference where her participation was partially supported by the project.

• **Intervention #6:** Supplementary Materials. (IR 4.1 *Improved Quality of Teaching*)

**Accomplishments:** A total of 32,000 exemplary supplementary materials that had been identified for all project schools based on research and appraisals by the PIU technical team with inputs from and an array of other educators were procured and delivered during the period. This included 28,000 new books donated by the International Book Program as a result of close collaboration between the J&A Home Office and the PIU team. Additional titles in reading and mathematics were identified in a "bottoms up" approach for future procurements under the project.

**Intervention #7:** Educational Technology. (IR 4.1 *Improved Quality of Teaching*)

Accomplishments: A Preliminary Educational Technology Plan: June 2001 was prepared. It is the result of a concerted response to the realities encountered in 2000-2001 and it provides a basis for the effective implementation the Education Technology Intervention based on the current contract and recently approved directives from the Ministry so as to assure that equipment needs of the project schools and related maintenance and servicing are addressed. Procurement of supplies such as A/V equipment for use under this intervention was advanced during the period.

■ Intervention #8: Training of Resource Teachers. (IR 4.1 *Improved Quality of Teaching*)

**Accomplishment:** The PIU collaborated with the Professional Development Unit in the area of Literacy and Mathematics Resource Teacher training by reinforcing PDU-coordinated training through the team's site-based technical support. During this period, the **Menu of Instructional Strategies** was duplicated and distributed to each LRT in NHP schools. The groundwork was laid for the well-founded assessment of resource teacher performance and the eventual selection of a new corps of teachers to replace those in NHP schools that require additional ones by the start of the new school year.

• Intervention #9: Linking MOEC Data Bases and Intervention #10: Linking Project School to EMIS Network. (IR 4.3 Improved Management of Schools)

**Accomplishments:** The Subcontractor, IDEAS, Ltd, completed the training of the newly recruited six EMIS Technician/Trainers in the area of the objectives purposes and functionality of the customized school management software, **Jamaica School Administrative System**. The EMIS T/Ts deployed the software in all except five of the project schools and captured all relevant data in one-third of the 72 schools and over 20 percent in 42 schools. This served as a basis for refinement of the software. The EMIS T/Ts' scope of work for an extension period through December 2001 was completed so as to address obstacles encountered and the matter of sustainability beyond the life of the project.

The major problems experienced during the report period included those associated with the austerity budget that extended through approximately the first half. The lack of responsiveness on the part of some school principals in terms exerting leadership continued and this is a major focus for planned summer workshops. Obstacles faced by the EMIS Technician/Trainers in assuring the utility of the Jamaica School Administrative System software will also need to be addressed in the plans for the year ahead as will the challenges to be faced in implementing the Educational Technology Intervention.

#### INTRODUCTION

This document describes the activities and accomplishments of the New Horizons for Primary Schools (NHP) Activity during January to June 2001. NHP has the objective to enhance the performance of Jamaican primary school students in numeracy and literacy. The focus is on those children who, because of poverty and other disabling conditions, have had little academic success in school. Increased academic success is to be accomplished through the development of model interventions in 72 schools that, when tested, can be used to improve the performance of low-achieving children throughout Jamaica. Following a brief description of the New Horizons Project, the overall expected results of the New Horizons activity are presented. The subsequent section makes up the bulk of the report and consists of a narrative description of the principal activities carried out during the reporting period. A section follows this on "Performance" that presents the activities, products generated from the activities, and outcomes of specific activities in tabular format. The next section discusses the problems encountered in project implementation and steps taken to resolve such problems. Activities to be completed during the upcoming reporting period are briefly described in the final section under "Statement of Work". All sections of the report are organized in terms of the Strategic Objective (SO) and the Intermediate Results (IRs) to which NHP responds. Specific lower level results are discussed in the narratives, as appropriate. The Appendix includes a list of all deliverables and other products submitted to the Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) at USAID from January – June 2001. (These are available upon request.) A financial status report for the period makes up the second section of the Appendix.

This semi-annual report is tied closely to the USAID/Jamaica Mission Results Framework and is consistent with USAID guidelines.

#### **Background**

New Horizons for Primary Schools recently completed the third year of a five-year effort. The NHP is designed to improve student performance in grades 1-6 through employing a series of interrelated interventions that work in concert to change not only the learning experiences of children in the classroom, but the broader enabling environment of the school and community. NHP is funded by USAID Jamaica and the overall project is a seven-year effort. NHP is being conducted under Juárez and Associates, Inc. in collaboration with IDEAS, Ltd.

NHP is working in partnership with the Jamaican Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture (MOEYC) and other members of the Jamaican education community to bring about changes in schools and classrooms that result in individual students having greater academic success in primary school. The strategic vision of NHP is to use a holistic, "bottoms up" approach to equip local communities, school principals, and teachers to improve local school policies, decision-making, and educational practice in favor of better quality learning for all children.

NHP supports the USAID/Jamaica strategic objective of *Increased literacy and numeracy among targeted Jamaican youth*. The NHP objectives of building capacity to both manage educational reform at the local level and to improve instructional practice and student learning in the classroom directly support several Intermediate Results. These are: IR 4.1 *Improved Quality of Teaching*; IR 4.2 *Increased School Attendance*, and IR 4.3 *Improved Management of Schools*. The SO is supported through the implementation of ten interrelated interventions: Developing innovative mathematics and literacy programs; providing in-service teacher training in reading and mathematics; providing governance and leadership training for schools, communities and parents; offering parent education and training; selective facilitating of health and nutrition activities; providing supplementary reading and mathematics materials; training teachers in educational technology; training resource teachers; integrating databases; and linking schools with the Jamaican regional and national EMIS system.

#### **Expected Results**

New Horizons furthers the Strategic Objective by achieving eleven expected results. These results span the ten interventions and can be summarized as follows:

- Marked improvement in reading and numeracy performance among primary school students
- Innovative curricula and materials, which meet the needs of individual schools
- Classroom and resource teachers trained in the latest instructional approaches for reading and mathematics, educational technology (including computer assisted instruction and educational media resources)
- Modernized school management
- Exposure of teachers, students, and communities to educational technology and information systems
- Breakfast and nutritional education programs instituted in a number of project schools
- Empowerment of school boards and parent/teacher organizations
- Greater professionalism of teachers
- Increased attendance and academic promotion
- Jamaican youth prepared for the technologically oriented marketplace
- Increased community and private sector involvement in support of schools

Prior to the reporting period, NHP supported the development of training activities for the implementation of the revised primary curriculum by working in close collaboration with the Core Curriculum Unit, the Professional Development Unit and others within the Ministry. This included the development of action plans for the delivery and utilization of the revised curriculum and instructional materials such as those received by the Media Services Unit. NHP reports from previous periods served to guide the PIU in the design and implementation of teacher training activities to provide effective instruction in numeracy and literacy, especially among the

neediest of project schools. Site-based and cluster workshops ranged from selecting literacy activities from the curriculum to match reading skills in comprehension; teaching students to formulate questions, evaluating the difficulties students encounter in reading comprehension, among others. In mathematics, areas reviewed included the teaching of algebra across the grades, the use of calculators across the curriculum, and others. In the previous periods, school specific literacy and numeracy programs were developed as key components of the school development plans. In addition, administrative computers were successfully delivered to all six Regional Offices and the 72 project schools. The PIU professional team has also assisted partners from the MOEYC Professional Development Unit in developing and implementing training plans for 156 resource teachers. Support was provided the National Council on Education in contracting consultants to write manuals and developed and implemented training plans for both school/community leaders and parents. During each of the previous years, NHP annual workplans were developed, principal training workshops on leadership, school development planning and resources utilization, among other topics, and a monitoring plan was designed and implemented to assist in the supervision of site-based technical assistance. With the identification and procurement of 32,000 books and other materials during the previous performance period, the stage was set for the distribution and proper utilization to be undertaken by the NHP in the final half of the academic year 2000-2001.

#### PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING THE REPORT PERIOD, JANUARY – JUNE 2001

Strategic Objective: Increased literacy and numeracy among targeted Jamaican youth.

Develop School Specific Literacy and Mathematics Innovative Programs. Given the continuous need for the Project Implementation Unit to sharply focus on child-centered numeracy and literacy programs in each of the 72 project schools, NHP principals continued to receive guidance in the refinement of their School Development Plans (SDPs) through the broad-based efforts of their School Development Teams. This resulted in the formulation of a Year 2000-2001 "Action Plan" at each school within which detailed needs, objectives, activities and corresponding resources and responsible persons were to be identified. As in the previous report period, this was reinforced during school visits and on other appropriate occasions such as the "Principals' Resources Utilization Seminar" conducted in March 2001. Revised SDPs in the form of action plans were received and reviewed by the PIU team members as another means of providing guidance in the implementation of individualized innovative programs in mathematics and Iteracy. This formed a basis for the three-day principals' workshop to be conducted in August 2001 at which school development planning, with an emphasis on the innovative instructional programs and resultant action plans are to be the focal points.

Implement Revised Primary Curriculum in Collaboration with MOEYC. As in previous periods the PIU worked closely with the Core Curriculum Unit (CCU) in implementing the curriculum in NHP schools in order to ensure that a base is in place for the innovative mathematics and literacy programs being developed by the project. To this end, PIU subject-matter specialists provided input in their areas of specialization to several MOEYC activities during the report period. These included the involvement in the preparation for the Summer 2001 Literacy Camps, participation in the on a Ministry's Literacy Initiative Committee which shares promising practices and common concerns with Core Curriculum representatives, other projects in which the CCU is implementing the Revised Primary Curriculum, and planning and implementing teacher training activities especially on site through fostering the use of the revised curriculum to promote child-centered learning activities. Many of these NHP activities complement the Revised Primary Curriculum by focusing on those children who, because of poverty or other disabling conditions, have had little success in school.

Conduct Principals' Seminar. The NHP partners conducted the Principals' Resource Utilization Seminar on March 2, 2001. With the arrival of an order of 32,000 books and other materials procured by the project and a book donation from the International Book Project, the PIU decided to reinforce its efforts in the area of proper resources utilization by focusing its second principals' workshop of the academic year on this significant topic. The meeting was timely in that it made it possible for some schools—especially the remote rural ones—to pick up new books that they might not have the opportunity to receive up to the date of the seminar. Other timely topics were also addressed such as the utilization of the NHP customized Jamaica School Administrative System (JSAS) software. Six main objectives were central to the seminar: (1) to coordinate the proper utilization of the text books and other resources

provided the schools by the Project during 2000-2001; (2) to instruct the teaching staff as to the structure and effective utilization of lesson plan format prescribed by the MOEY&C under the Revised Primary School Curriculum; (3) to further implement the improvement of school management by the utilization of the customized software installed by the EMIS Technician/Trainers; (4) to demonstrate increased knowledge of the utilization of teacher portfolios for effective professional development of the teaching staff; (5) to describe the major revisions to the NHP Educational Technology Plan; and (6) to explain to their School Development Teams and others the recommendations identified by the participants of the seminar. Over 85 percent of the NHP schools were represented at this event. The results of the evaluation were highly. The main area for improvement was that of providing more time for principal discussion and interaction among themselves. Overall, most participants noted that "…the seminar provided the school principals an opportunity to share their individual school experiences with the utilization of available resources and promoting more effective teaching methods." The **Principals' Resource Utilization Seminar** report submitted in June 2001 provides further details on the design and implementation of the seminar.

Report Status of PIU Site-based Technical Assistance. The PIU prepared a status report on the implementation of the site-based technical support which accounts for the activities and accomplishments for the six-month period under review and, in essence, is a continuation of a document with a similar title that was submitted to the Agency in December 2000 to cover the first half of the same school year. The two reports combined give a profile of PIU site-based activities and accomplishments in the field for the year. The PIU site-based technical assistance support strategy for the year 2000-2001 was a response to the findings of the 1999 formative evaluation that had underscored the need for: (a) improvement in the quality of teaching, and (b) more child-centered learning in the 72 project schools. This was accomplished by buttressing the institutionalized process of implementing the innovative instructional strategies in literacy and numeracy in the project schools. Following the visits and technical assistance provided all 72 schools prior to January 2001, the PIU specialists continue the series of visits to schools, often accompanied by one or more colleagues, to implement the activities outlined in the Technical Support Strategy Document, as well as to assist resource teachers with their in-house training initiatives for their fellow teachers. These activities from January through to June 2001 resulted in a total of 227 school visits, with an average of 4.2 times per school for the year. An average of 1.5 PIU members were present on each visit. A total of 777 classrooms were visited from a clinical perspective, the appropriate checklist completed, and a discussion held with the teacher of the class to make observations and suggest improvements. A total of 231 demonstration teaches were given, an average of 3.2 per school. Most of this type of intervention involved a more child-centered approach. Classroom teachers were encouraged to use an array of new or innovative approaches. For example, 720 of the 757 teachers were using portfolios with their students. A total of 1069 man-hours were devoted to these subsequent visits during the year. This averaged out at 14.8 man-hours per school or about 1.4 hours per classroom teacher. In looking ahead to the 2001-2001 site-based activities of the PIU, it is suggested a June Status Report on the New Horizons for Primary Schools Project Implementation Unit (PIU) Ste-Based Technical Support Strategy that perhaps the only viable option to increase contact time while striving to optimize sustainability is for PIU members to be in contact with more than one classroom teacher at a time. It is further recommended that intra-school and inter-school workshops may have to be given greater prominence for this is to be achieved.

Conduct Formative Evaluation Activities. In May 2001 the Formative Evaluation Team, headed by Dr. Ray chesterfield, completed a consultancy that had as its primary purpose the preparation of local educators to carry out systematic data collection for the annual formative evaluation for the New Horizons for Primary Schools (NHP) project. This activity is reported on in the consultants' **Trip Report: May 6 – May 19, 2001**. It is noted therein that in order to respond to the capacity building interests of the MOEYC, a workshop on evaluation methodology was held for technicians in the Ministry, members of local teachers' colleges, and NHP personnel. Consistent with the NHP objectives and Revised Primary Curriculum, the formative evaluation focuses on changes in schools and classrooms that promote active participation of students in the learning process. Therefore, the workshop dealt with observation and interview techniques to measure progress toward NHP objectives. The week following the training workshop a team of the participants collected data from a sample of NHP primary schools. These data will be used to inform the project of progress in implementing program activities and the findings of this evaluation will be used to measure project results. Also, earlier in the period, the Evaluation Team completed the analysis of the year 2000 Grade Six Achievement Test and Grade Three Diagnostic Test data when they became available from the Student Assessment Unit. Thirteen **Performance Data Tables** were produced. The data were interpreted and integrated into the findings for the year in time for the USAID "R4" reporting to Washington.

Support Participant Training. During the six-month period, short-term overseas "participant training" opportunities took place with the administrative support of the Contractor's Home Office staff and PIU personnel. This was done in collaboration with the Office of the Director of Projects, Professional Development Unit and National Council on Education. This had impact in a number of project intervention areas, namely Intervention #s 1 and 2 (Developing Innovative Mathematics and Literacy Programs and In-service Teacher Training in Reading and Mathematics, respectively), Intervention 4 (Improved Parent/Community Involvement) Intervention 5 (Health and Nutrition), and Intervention 8 (Resource Teacher Training). Conferences and training workshops attended by a total of eighteen NHP participants and supporting stakeholders included the Second Caribbean Regional Conference on Parenting, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Annual Conference, Centre for Caribbean Medicine Conference, International Reading Association Annual Conference, American Counselor Association Conference, and the Association for Curriculum and Supervision Classroom Leadership Workshop. An NHP Partners' "Study Tour, Participant Training, and Incentives Committee" was established during the report period so as to assure greater "transparency" as well as to coordinate project decision-making in this area with that of a MOEYC-wide committee with similar purposes.

### **Intermediate Result 4.1:** *Improved Teacher Quality*

Support Improvement in the Implementation, Monitoring and Sharing of Effective Practices. The Site-Based Technical Support Strategy for the year 2000-2001 was designed to sustain and inspire the bold attempt of the project to reform literacy and numeracy instruction in seventy two (72) schools across Jamaica resulting in significant improvement of student performance significantly in these two curriculum areas. From September to December 2000, the PIU Specialists and Project Director conducted school-based visits designed to collaborate with the resource teachers in improving the individual literacy and numeracy programs along with the quality of teaching. This was done in coordination with the principal at each school. The strategy was extended from January to June 2001 with a greater emphasis on demonstration teaching, fostering of site-based and cluster workshops by resource teachers and the sharing of practices which proved successful. The reader will recall that the five major approaches to the PIU site-based technical support strategy for the year 2000-2001 incorporated (1) Clinical Supervisory Practices, (2) Demonstration Teaching, (3) Utilization of Teacher Portfolios, (4) Intra- and Inter-school Classroom Observations, and (5) Sharing of "Best" (Effective) Practices. During the January to June 2001 period, emphasis was given to the continued collaborative work with the resource teachers, with the expectation that they would be actively involved in the improvement initiatives during and subsequent to each site visit. The PIU Specialists and Project Director, as providers of the technical assistance, were engaged, among others, in collaborating with the resource teachers in promoting improved teaching skill, providing systematic, constructive feedback to classroom teachers, and modeling instructional strategies. In order to more effectively oversee these practices and those of the 72 school principals while monitoring some of their effects, the large school-by-school monitoring chart designed in the previous period was used on a school-by-school basis with the results aggregated on a large wall chart in the NHP office. Principals were instructed to assess the progress of their own schools using the chart. It was reviewed and utilized by the PIU Specialists, PDU Training Coordinator, NCE Project Implementation Officer, Core Curriculum Unit colleagues and others to assure improved project effectiveness. In addition to more effective instructional leadership at the school level, the main result of these activities was improved teaching and learning as evidenced in the quality and quantity of teacher-student and student-student interaction, degree of critical thinking in the class, types and quality of student questioning, and overall improvement toward a more student-centered learning environment. These activities are described in greater detail in the June report entitled Supporting Continued Improvement in the implementation, Monitoring and Sharing of Effective Practices in **Individual Mathematics and Literacy Programs in NHP Schools.** 

<u>Promote Ability of Teachers to Use New Approaches</u>. Teachers' ability to use new instructional approaches in their interactions with students in their classrooms was promoted and documented by the PIU during the period. This is described thoroughly in two detailed (June 2001) reports: (1) Evidence of the Status of Teachers' Ability to Use New Approaches in Their Interactions with Students and (2) The Use of Teacher and Student Portfolios at the Classroom Level in New Horizons for Primary Schools. Among other approaches promoted by the NHP implementation team members are authentic immersion in literature, reciprocal teaching, student and teacher portfolios, reading resource centers, the use of manipulatives, cooperative learning, and the production of

teaching aids. All project schools utilized innovative approaches during the period, with student journals and both teacher and student portfolios being among the most frequently applied. Portfolios for improving teaching and overall professional development were encouraged as a method of showcasing effective instructional practices among NHP classroom teachers. Teacher portfolios were promoted as a PIU technical support strategy, which is effective in enabling the project-school teachers to be reflective classroom practitioners. This approach was promoted as a means of empowering the teachers to manage instruction and assessment as supportive processes on a daily basis. Both the clinical supervisory practices and the demonstration teaching have been guiding project schoolteachers to compile their portfolios. The experiences gained from these teacher initiatives have had very favourable effects on the use of portfolios and/or journals by students. This was documented by the PIU and sample teacher portfolios were circulated for further understanding and emulation. Student portfolios present a viable alternative for dealing with assessment and evaluation. The extent to which portfolios have been adopted by the NHP classroom teachers was surveyed by the PIU. The findings are highly favourable in all but 12 of the 72 project schools in that they range from 83 to 100 percent for the teachers in each school with 54 of the 72 at the 100 percent level for "classes with portfolio" usage. For "teachers with portfolio" the numbers are not as impressive, but they are perceived as highly satisfactory by the PIU members in that teachers in all except two schools are using this innovation and 30 of the 72 schools have 100 percent of their teachers with portfolios. The findings revealed that teacher have high regards for the benefits of portfolios. An **On the Horizons** newsletter article (February 2001) and other project-developed reference materials were distributed among the principals, resource teachers and, as appropriate, other stakeholders during the report period.

Reinforce PDU-Coordinated Training of Mathematics and Literacy Resource Teachers. In addition to the Project Implementation Unit site-based technical assistance efforts described above, the PIU collaborated in the area of Literacy and Mathematics Resource Teacher training with the NHP Training Coordinator assigned to the Professional Development Unit. In previous periods, the PIU Specialists collaborated with the PDU in the development of selection criteria and identification of candidates for resource teachers in mathematics and reading. The PIU team also reviewed and synchronization of the Life of Project plan and the PDU five-year work plan in terms of recruitment, selection and placement of resource teachers in former period. During the previous period, PIU members, along with Education Officers from the Core Curriculum Unit, assisted the PDU in the planning and implementation of workshops for the training of Resource Teachers. The production of a wide variety of classroom resource materials resulted from these collaborative activities with the PDU and Core Curriculum Unit. During this period, the Menu of Instructional Strategies was duplicated and distributed to each LRT in NHP schools. The Training Coordinator conducted training workshops at the NHP school cluster level at which these and other resource materials were utilized. A total of 87 resource teachers, three principals and 58 students attended these workshops on such areas that support the resource teachers' multi-faceted role. From April to June the resource teacher selection criteria and other documents were reviewed by the PDU Training Coordinator with PIU input. This was done in order to lay the groundwork for a well-founded assessment of resource teacher performance and the eventual selection of a new corps of teachers to replace those in NHP schools that require additional ones by the start of the new school year.

Identify and Procure Supplementary Materials. The contractor, with close collaboration among NHP partners in the Core Curriculum Unit, project schools, PIU, publishers, and the Home Office staff, procured approximately 32,000 exemplary supplementary materials during the period as a result of early identification of an array of potential materials from diverse sources. The vast majority of these resource materials were distributed in March of 2001 in a timely manner for use during the instructional resources utilization activities implemented by the PIU and its partners. This was done as early as possible during the performance period in spite of the budgetary constraints that continued through the first quarter of 2001. Prior to this date, the PIU and J&A Home Office worked closely to seek, review and receive sample resources that appeared to respond to the needs of the teachers and students in the project schools. Alternative sources such as those donated by the International Book Project (IBP) were reviewed. A total of 28,000 books were donated by IBP. In addition, approximately 4,000 exemplary books were purchased by the project and received in the same January 2001 shipment as the IBP donation. This was complemented by the procurement and distribution of printer supplies and stationery for use with the "administrative computers" installed in each of the schools during the previous six-month performance period. A set of Microsoft Encarta Reference Suite 2001 Encyclopedia consisting of seven comprehensive CDs was procured for each of the 72 schools in order to assist the teachers and students in research intended to further enhance literacy and numeracy development. The principals' seminar referred to earlier and instructions provided resource teacher covered the care as well as the proper use of the materials supplied the schools. It is noted that the total cost of materials distributed was in excess of US \$ 680,000 of which US \$ 636, 000 was donated to the project school children. As a result of the activities underway at the level of each of the 72 project schools since the previous period, completed forms that indicate the supplementary materials desired by classroom teachers are being given consideration at the project-office level. This will constitute one of the main avenues for the determination of future procurements of exemplary materials in support of improved quality of teaching and increased achievement of the targeted children in numeracy and literacy.

Prepare Educational Technology Plan Based on MOEYC Input. In order to set the stage for the remainder of the project and in particular the new school year, the Project Director in collaboration with NHP partners prepared a Preliminary Educational Technology Plan: June 2001. This is the result of a concerted response to the realities encountered in 2000-2001, the second full year of activities in the 72 Project schools. The plan provides a basis for the effective implementation the Education Technology Intervention based on the current contract and recently approved directives from the Ministry so as to assure that equipment needs of the project schools and related maintenance and servicing are addressed. It is based on a number of experiences and especially the recommendations of Dr. Karen Price, Educational Technology Specialist, as provided in her report following a consultancy completed in January 2000. The PIU took her recommendations and consulted with various stakeholders regarding the major revisions required by such a plan. Stakeholder feedback was incorporated into a Revised Educational Technology Plan (December 2000) that was deliberated on by the MOEYC from January to May 2001. Final recommendations from the Ministry constitute a major rationale for the preliminary plan being set forth in June 2001. The current plan as requested by the Ministry is based on client (especially student and teacher) needs, life-of-project resources, anticipated supporting resources, and a myriad other factors. Considering the revised

plan, history, previous recommendations and current progress of NHP goals, the MOEYC requested that modifications be incorporated into the finalization of a new proposed strategy for this intervention. The major recommendations set forth are now part of the preliminary plan: (1) establishment of one Multi-media Resource Center in Region II; (2) procurement of at least one of each of the following items for the remaining 71 project schools—computer, television with VCR, audio tape recorder, and overhead projector. It was also recommended by the Ministry that a full-time Advisor in Multi-media Resources Utilization be employed. Such a position would give oversight to this activity and would involve employment through the duration of the project and liaison between the Media Services Unit, Regional Offices, NHP schools, and Multi-Media Resource Center. This plan is viewed as a "stepping stone" to the more elaborate long-range plan to be formulated by the NHP stakeholders at all levels under the guidance of the NHP Educational Technology Specialist.

#### Intermediate Result 4.2: Increased School Attendance

Collaborate with NCE Parental Training Activities. The institutional contractor collaborated with the National Council on Education (NCE) in contracting a local consultant to conduct eight NHP school cluster workshops to train 268 parents as Parent Training Coordinators in project schools in six regions island-wide. The consultant's scope of work extended for this purpose. This was in support of the Intermediate Result Improved School/Parent/Community Involvement. Also within this Intermediate Result the NCE assisted in the establishment of Study Circles in NHP schools, providing guest lectures at PTA meetings on various aspects of parenting and study circles. The PIU Specialists and Project Director served as presenters and participated in some of the training activities conducted by the NCE. The NCE also distributed the booklet on PTA Revitalization which was highlighted by the NCE in its workshops and by the PIU in its work at project schools. As reported earlier, the contractor also provided administrative assistance for the participation of the NCE Project Implementation Officer and parents at a training conference on parenting during the period.

Implement Breakfast Program. The NHP Breakfast Program was in place throughout the report period, operating for 114 days with an average of 468 needy students being served per day in the eight project schools. An increasing number of children have been added to the list of beneficiaries at the schools on the breakfast program with the current number of 974 names on record. The schools have continued to implement the feeding of the selected children according to the established protocols and to keep monitoring data on the forms provided at start-up. Weighing and measuring of the children have been implemented as a means of demonstrating benefit from the breakfasts being served. The Nutrition Specialist, who was less than half time due to the austerity budget through April, received support from the New Horizons Project Account who assisted in the program monitoring process. The Specialist produced a **Status Report on the Breakfast Program** that picks up where a similar report (December 2000) left off regarding the breakfast program in the eight project schools. It uses January 2000 data since the monitoring data were to be collected in July for the period of January to June 2001 and analyzed. The status report covers the objectives for the period under consideration: (1) evaluate the progress made in

instituting structures for sustainability; (2) analyze the baseline data collected in January 2000, and (3) determine the benefits of the breakfast program. In addressing these areas, progress is covered in terms of the benefits to the children, quality control, and structures for sustainability. The possibility is being explored for increasing the number of schools on the program as of September 2001. Activities were also carried out during the period to contract a Community Development Specialist to conduct community mobilization workshops in the new school year I order to generate community support for the school programs. Teacher training needs have also been identified with the intent of increasing the commitment of the teachers to a successful and sustainable program.

#### **Intermediate Result 4.3:** *Improved Management of Schools*

Install Jamaica School Administrative System Software. In earlier periods of the project, "administrative computers" were installed in the 72 NHP schools and six regional offices. In December 2000, six EMIS Technician/Trainers, one to be assigned to each of the six Regional Offices, were identified for employment by J&A. They became part of the Project Implementation Unit in January 2001 and initiated their orientation and training that focused on the objectives, purposes and functionality of the customized school management software being designed and developed by the Subcontractor, Ideas Ltd. Bruce Newman, EMIS Specialist, conducted extensive out-of-country technical assistance throughout the six-month period and two in-country consultancies (January 21 - 31 and April 25 - May 5) to address these objectives and incorporate the implementation experience into the design of the customized Jamaica School Administrative System software that was further improved over the course of the report period. The Specialist produced two trip reports covering the accomplishments during the consultancies. Central and regional MOEYC personnel and other stakeholders were provided a demonstration of the capacity of the JSAS during the Specialist's latter consultancy. The EMIS T/T Coordinator submitted various reports based on the experiences of the six-member team over the course of period, culminating in the June 2001 Report on the Installation of the Jamaica School Administrative System Software and Related Activities. The team deployed the powerful software intended for Improved Management of Schools to all except five of the 72 NHP schools. Deployment to the others was not possible up to the time of this report largely due to defective computers that required repairs. Total capture of relevant data was completed in one-third of the schools while the remaining schools all had at least 20 percent completion of data capture. Training to varying degrees was conducted in all the project schools and a Quick Reference Users' Manual to be used along with the JSAS was completed. The training activity, data entry responsibilities of the school personnel, obstacles faced such as defective electrical wiring systems, and other concerns that impact sustainability were given consideration and are to be addressed in the plans being formulated for the remainder of the project. The EMIS T/Ts' scope of work for an extension period through December 2001 was completed with solutions to these issues in mind. The Encarta 2001 Multimedia **Encyclopedia**, cited elsewhere in this semi-annual report, will be deployed soon after school reopens in September.

Collaboration with the NCE in the Improvement of School Boards. J&A assisted in extending the scope of work of a local consultant to provide technical assistance in the further development of an "Operations Manual on Governance and Leadership for School Boards" under the NCE. The consultant researched relevant reference materials for the second phase of the manual development based on the recommended adjustments for finalization. During the report period, the NCE also undertook the examination of the 23 training modules on seven topics in the area of governance and leadership training, including school development planning referred to in an earlier accomplishment section of this semi-annual report. These activities complemented the others noted here in support of Improved Management of Schools.

# PERFORMANCE

Table 1: SO 4. Increased Literacy and Numeracy Among Targeted Jamaican Youth

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPANTS	PRODUCTS	OUTCOME/RESULTS
1 Developing Innovative Mathematics and Literacy Programs.  Develop School Specific Innovative Programs	Principals receive guidance In preparation of "Action Plans" that incorporate numeracy and literacy	PIU Specialists, Project Director, 72 Principals, 156 Resource Teachers and 650 SDT members	Long-term School Development Plans and Annual Action Plans*1	NHP schools have annual operational plans that address innovative programs in math and literacy guide SDTs, et al
Implement Revised Primary Curric ulum in Collaboration with MOEYC	PIU provided specialized input to activities including planning, training and guidance in the on-site use of the curriculum and other "literacy initiatives"	PIU Specialists and Project Director, members of Core Curriculum Unit, PDU Training Coordinator; approx. 750 teachers and 72 NHP principals	Improved lesson plans and instruction in mathematics and literacy as well as other disciplines  Utilization Plan for	NHP principals and teachers capable of implementing the revised curriculum.
Conduct NHP Principals' Seminar  Report Status of PIU Site-	One-day forum on resources utilization and related topics	PIU team, NCE, PDU, 60 principals or designated representatives and approx. 20 MOEC Ed Officers	Supplementary Reading Materials*2, "The Teacher Portfolio"*3 & article in "On the Horizons" newsletter*4 with report on Principals' Resource Utilization Seminar *5	Principals are able to describe their role as leaders in school reform and coordinate proper utilization of instructional resources
based Technical Assistance	PIU site-based activities are conducted & reported	PIU; over 120 teachers and 250 principals, VPs & RTs	Status Report on TA *6	Increased evidence of child-centered learning
Conduct Formative Evaluation Activities	Evaluation Team trains local educators in evaluation methodology, integrate 2000 test data into findings for that year, and design and conduct year 2001 fieldwork	4 J&A Evaluation Team members, 15 local educators, 19 sample school principals and staff members	13 Performance Data Tables*7 and Trip Report: May 6 – May 19, 2001*8	Local educators trained to conduct NHP evaluation field work and project informed of progress in implementing program activities

Table 2: IR 4.1 Improved Teacher Quality

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPANTS	PRODUCTS	OUTCOME/RESULTS
2 In-service Teacher Training in Reading and Mathematics Support Participant Training	See Table 1 above  Opportunities for professional development through NHP-supported overseas training	11 NHP stakeholders, including Principals, Resource Teachers, Specialists and Education	Required trip reports produced*9	Participants utilize and share effective practices learned
Support Monitoring and Sharing Effective Practices	Engagement with teachers and resource teachers in demonstration lessons, clinical supervision, and effective teaching	Officers  750 teachers, including resource teachers in all 72 schools and principals; monitored by PIU, Core Curriculum, PDU et al	Report on Supporting Continuous Improvement in the Implementation, of Effective Practices*10	Resource and classroom teachers more effective in delivering child-centered instruction
Report on Teachers' Ability to Use of New Approaches	Coupled with above activity, an array of effective practices are promoted for teacher use	Same as above and see Table 1	Two reports* 11 & 12 documenting ability of teachers to use the innovative approaches	Classroom teachers are aware of and utilizing an array of potentially effective approaches in literacy and mathematics
6 Supplementary Reading and Mathematics Materials Identify and Procure Supplementary Materials	MOEC- and USAID- approved exemplary materials procured and distributed along with large book donation	PIU, USAID, MOEC, J&A Home Office and the International Book Program along with NHP	Report on the Distribution Supplementary Materials and Book Donations under NHP*13 (32,000 books)	Eventual provision of additional learning opportunities to NHP students

Table 2: IR 4.1 Improved Teacher Quality, Continued.

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPANTS	PRODUCTS	OUTCOME/RESULTS
7 Educational Technology Prepare Educational Technology Plan	NHP Ed Tech Plan prepared on basis of MOEYC recommendations	Project Director, Media Service Unit Head, and other stakeholders such as Principals, Regional Territorial Education Officers, Directors, and Resource Teachers with consultant input from previous periods and response from Ministry's Director of Projects	Preliminary Educational Technology Plan: June 2001 * <b>14</b>	Appropriate technology mixes for NHP schools and eventual improved quality of teaching and learning
Training Literacy and Mathematics Resource Teacher Reinforce Resource Teachers Training	Assistance to the PDU in assuring implementation of lessons learned by Literacy and Math Resource Teachers and related activities such as review of selection criteria for the development of evaluation process	PDU Training Coordinator assigned to the NHP, PIU team members, and other stakeholders in Ministry such as Core Curriculum Unit Officers	Resource materials, e.g. PIU Specialists compiled "Menu of Instructional Strategies" distributed during period; no contractor products	Support for teacher implementation of innovations and staff professional development

Table 3: IR 4.2 Increased School Attendance

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPANTS	PRODUCTS	OUTCOME/RESULTS
5 Health and Nutrition Implement and Report on Breakfast Program in Select Schools	Breakfast Program continued in eight NHP schools, including PIU guidance, monitoring of attendance, meals prepared and served, finances and other aspects. Specialist completed status report	Eight participating schools, Health and Nutrition Specialist, Project Accountant, Parent-School Committee Members and 468 Children	Individual School Menus, Meals, Financial Reports and New Horizons "Status Report on Breakfast Program" *15	Participation of needy students in program and school learning activities with increased attendance and eventual improved achievement
4 Parent Education and Training Collaborate with National Council on Education Parent Training Activities	J&A collaborated with the NCE in contracting local consultant to implement training program in eight NHP school clusters. PIU participated in some activities and served as speakers	Local Consultant, NCE Executive Director and Project Implementation Officer, PIU and PDU as guests participants at workshops, PIU Accountant, other stakeholders and 268 Parents trained as Parent Training Coordinators	No contractor products	Parent Training Coordinators are guided as to the establishment of Study Circles

Table 4: IR 4.3 Improved Management of Schools

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPANTS	PRODUCTS	OUTCOME/RESULTS
9 Integrating Databases and 10 Linking Schools with the Jamaican Regional and National EMIS Network Install JSAS Software for Improved School Management	EMIS Technician/Trainers trained by Specialist of objectives, purposes and functionality of customized school management software, onsite training and data collection and entry in each project school	Six EMIS T/Ts, EMIS Specialist, Project Director, PIU representatives, Planning Unit, Regional Directors, and 72 NHP school principals and designated school personnel, as appropriate	Jamaica School Administrative System (JSAS) Software * 16 Report on the Installation of the JSAS Software and Related Activities *17 Quick Reference Users' Manual *18 75 Encarta 2001Multimedia Encyclopedias *19 procured for September	Support for the improvement of school management and decision making after training.  Eventual modernized and efficient management system functioning
3 Providing Governance and Leadership Training for Schools, Communities and Parents  Collaborate with NCE in School Board Improvement	J&A assisted in extending contract consultant to develop manual for School Boards PIU personnel assist in	NCE staff, Consultants, Stakeholders as who examine the products, including PIU members	No contractor products. (NCE produced "Operations Manual on Governance and Leadership of School	Provision of efficient and accurate references and training materials for School Boards.
	examining modules submitted for training		Boards" and 23 modules on 7 topics on Governance and Leadership Training)	

#### PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

- Obligation of funds. The level of funding and the uncertainties surrounding the timing of the obligation of funds continued to be the most challenging problem encountered by the contractor through April of the six-month report period. This difficulty extended back over more than one year from the time there occurred a "temporary shortfall" in project funding. This resulted in reduction of effort, a cutback on supplementary materials, limits to the contracting of consultants, and delay in study tour plans. While the relatively low-cost site-based training in the form of clinical supervisory practices, demonstration teaching, "in-house" workshops in NHP schools and other approaches were not noticeably influenced during the entire report period, January to June, the "clouds" surrounding the austerity budget and delays in the notices on funding obligations influenced the decision making and flow of activities. Once the air cleared around half way through the period, the PIU collaborated closely with the J&A Home Office in order to move ahead on expenditures in the areas of supplementary materials acquisitions in mathematics and reading and the identification of materials for future procurements. The educational technology also took on new life with the prospects of funding for the remainder of the contract. Actions taken to resolve the funding situation included the continuation of exerted efforts by the Project Director to work even more closely with the Project Accountant and the Home. The USAID Cognizant Technical Officer contributed substantial time and effort as well and it is perceived that funding-related problems of this nature have been resolved over the second half of the period.
- Challenges faced in implementing the Educational Technology Intervention. The delay that followed the December 2000 presentation of the revised plans for Educational Technology under New Horizons impacted decision-making by the contractor on the level of technical support, software and hardware considerations, level of financing, and other elements of the intervention. Little work could be done during the first five months of the period in this significant area of technical assistance in support of improved numeracy and literacy among the targeted schools until the Ministry's response to the proposed December 2000 plan was received. With the reduced time and nature of the plan (as described elsewhere in this report), expediency is required in the contracting of a long-term Multi-Media Resources Utilization Specialist required to properly address the dimensions of the plan in concert with appropriate MOEYC stakeholders such as the Media Services Unit personnel.
- Limited responsiveness of some principals and level of instructional leadership. The area of school development planning required a great deal more effort on the part of the PIU in previous report periods and far more than anticipated at the outset of the project. While several actions have been taken to correct this, a key factor in success in improving student achievement through NHP-guided activities remains the level of leadership of some school principals and their ability or willingness to complete their responsibilities as NHP partners. While progress, for example, was noted in the area of SDPs in most project schools in the form of revised action plans and timely reports negligence has been noted on the part of specific schools. The PIU continues to address these difficulties on a school-by-school basis, but a more concerted effort involving the NCE and other stakeholders is required.

The long-term solution to the overall problem on lack of responsiveness by some schools and the need for improved planning and leadership will, of course, require a system-wide solution that addresses both principal recruitment and professional development. NHP should be about the business of contributing recommendations to the Ministry as a result of its experiences in this significant area of implementing school reform.

• Obstacles to Implementing EMIS Site-Based Activities. During the installation of the Jamaica School Administrative System software on NHP-provided "administrative computer" suites in project schools, the EMIS Technician/Trainers faced a myriad of obstacles. Besides the frequent and unpredictable power outages that plagued the island and disrupted the schedules established for data capture and training, the system of data capture and storage in use were found to be extremely unsystematic and unreliable. Hence, it was often very difficult to access accurate data for inputting into the JSAS software. This, in turn, led to lengthy delays and input errors that later had to be corrected. There were defective electrical wiring systems in two schools, preventing computer functioning and continuation of data capture. Two schools also had robberies that resulted in the loose of computer equipment. These obstacles and the demands on the principals or other person(s) being trained at some schools interrupted the completion of effective training during regular school hours. Clearly some of these obstacles are beyond the scope of the project to resolve, while others will require serious reflection and resultant plans and actions on the part of the EMIS team, Central Ministry and other stakeholders.

#### STATEMENT OF WORK

During latter portion of the report period, circumstances that influenced the rate of accomplishment of New Horizons for Primary Schools changed. This was especially so in the area of the obligation of funds. The austerity budget period of approximately 14 months was replaced with one of projected and, in time, actual well-founded spending. This has created a higher level of effort in the high-cost areas of the project. In particular, Supplementary Materials in Reading and Mathematics (Intervention # 6), Educational Technology (# 7) and Linking Schools with Jamaican Regional and National EMIS Network (#10) can be now be given more attention by the contractor because of the assurances of increased obligations and the lifting of the "clouds" of uncertainty that prevailed during the previous two performance periods. This will require substantial revisiting, some rethinking and possible "reprogramming". The final version of the Year Four (2001-2001) Annual Workplan will reflect the recommendations resulting from these deliberations and will likely incorporate additional activities and higher expenditures under at least the first two of these three International consultants will be contracted in areas that have been underemphasized to date such as classroom Interventions. assessment and cooperative learning. Other ways of increasing the effectiveness of the PIU efforts to impact the quality of individual school mathematics and literacy programs are under consideration and some well-founded decisions will be made prior to the August resource teachers' and principals' workshops and the start of the new academic year. It is also foreseen that there will be the perhaps both an international and a local advisor in the field of educational technology. One or more follow-up trips by the EMIS Specialist are anticipated in order to assure that the customized school management software is obtaining the expected results and that the training and other activities are on target. This will require school visits and extensive "trouble-shooting" activities by the specialist and EMIS Technician/Trainers. The breakfast programs will be further reviewed and monitored by the local Nutrition Specialist who will be on contract throughout July to December. The current level of 50 percent funding for the eight breakfast school programs should be adjusted upwards to 100 percent due to the inadequate funding provided during the austerity budget period. It is likely that an additional six to eight more NHP schools will be added to the program on the basis of responses to the selection criteria. The Formative Evaluation Team is expected in country in September 2001 in order to conduct the second evaluation workshop with local educators trained in May 2001. This local team, under the coordination of the recently hired local NHP Evaluation Specialist, is likely to conduct the May 2002 annual project performance evaluation field activities in accordance with the Performance Monitoring Plan. Process evaluation activities are also to be proposed by the NHP Evaluation Specialist in consultation with the PIU as a complement to the annual formative evaluation.

# $\underline{A\ P\ P\ E\ N\ D\ I\ X}$

■ Reference List: Products/Deliverables

• Semi-Annual Financial Status Report

## Reference List: Products/Deliverables (Cited in the Performance Charts Section)

- 1. Individual School Development Plans and Action plans for 2000-2001
- 2. Utilization Plan for Supplementary Materials (February 2001)
- 3. The Teacher Portfolio (February 2001)
- 4. "On the Horizons" Newsletter, Issue No. 2 (February 2001)
- 5. Principals' Resource Utilization Seminar (June 2001)
- 6. Status Report on the New Horizons for Primary Schools Project Implementation Unit (PIU) Site-Based Technical Assistance Support Strategy
- 7. Year 2000 Performance Data Tables (Annex to Year 2000 Project Performance Report)
- 8. Trip Report: May 6-19<sup>th</sup>, 2001 Prepared by Ray Chesterfield, et al.
- 9. Participant Training Reports for Report Period (available upon request)
- 10. Supporting Continued Improvement in the Implementation, Monitoring and Sharing of Effective Practices (June 2001)
- 11. Status of Teacher's Ability to Use New Approaches in their Interactions with Students (June 2001)
- 12. The Use of Teacher and Student Portfolios at the Classroom Level in New Horizons for Primary Schools (June 2001)
- 13. Distribution of Supplementary Materials and Book Donations Under the New Horizons for Primary Schools Project (June 2001)
- 14. Preliminary Educational Technology Plan (June 2001)

- 15. Status Report on Breakfast Program (June 2001)
- 16. Jamaica School Administrative System (JSAS) Software designed by Ideas, Ltd. (2001)
- 17. Report on the Installation of the Jamaica School Administrative System Software and Related Activities (June 2001)
- 18. "Quick Reference Users' Manual" to accompany JSAS Software (2001)